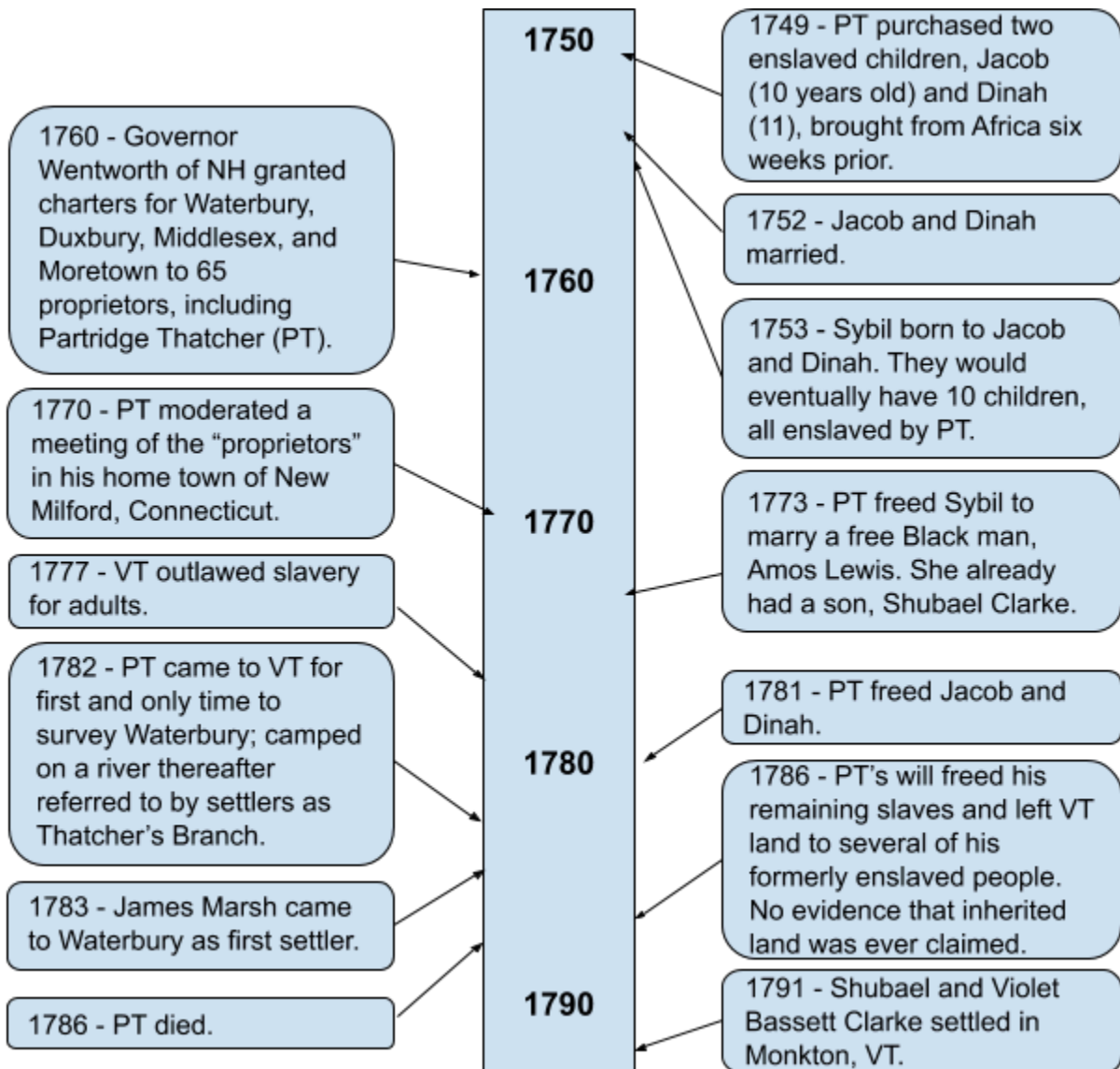


Day One

Background

The Waterbury Area Anti Racism Coalition recently discovered that Thatcher Brook Primary School was named after Thatcher Brook which was named after Partridge Thatcher, a Duxbury land owner and slave owner in the mid 1700s. As we strive to acknowledge racial injustices in HUUSD and the larger community, we feel it's important to raise awareness on such issues and open an outlet for conversation and, potentially, action.



<https://www.thinglink.com/scene/1390340635721990145>

Reading (can also be given as homework)

[Racism Around Every Corner](#) by Nellie Peyton (high school)

[Newsela](#) (middle school)

Day Two

5 Minute Write or Turn and Talk on any of the Following

High School

1. What is your reaction to the article?
2. Is this information surprising / had you heard about Thatcher's namesake before?
3. Is it fair to hold Thatcher accountable for something that was considered normal at the time?
4. Are schools and monuments named after people like Thatcher preserving history or representing institutionalized racism?
5. Does / should the fact that he and his wife 'raised the children as their own'¹ change or impact your answers to previous questions?
6. What, if any, action should be taken now that we know Thatcher was a slaveholder?

Middle School

1. What is your reaction to the article?
2. Is the information about Partridge Thatcher new to you?
3. Do you think it is fair to blame Thatcher now for something that was common back then?
4. Do you think that naming stuff (schools, monuments, roads) after people who supported slavery is okay?
5. Multiple sources say Thatcher was kind and treated the slaves as his own children. Does this change the way you think about him as a person. Does this change your thinking about whether or not the brook or school should be named after him?
6. Should any actions be taken now that we know Thatcher was a slaveholder? (changing the name...)

Open Discussion

Review Norms - Created by VT educator Rhiannon Kim

1. Be with, lean into, and learn from the discomfort: conversations that lead to discomfort can be opportunities for growth and learning. Practice grounding techniques, take pauses, and reflect on discomfort.
2. Practice “both/and”: When speaking practice saying “and” instead of “but”. This acknowledges and honors multiple realities. Our view of reality may differ: speaking one’s truth does not mean interpreting, debating, or correcting what others say.
3. Understand the difference between intent and impact: Try to understand and acknowledge impact. Denying the impact of something said by focusing on intent is often more destructive than the initial interaction.
4. Practice mindful listening: Try to avoid planning what you’ll say as you listen to others. Listen with your whole self.
5. Accept and expect non closure: This agreement asks participants to “hang out in uncertainty” and not rush to quick solutions, especially in relation to racial understanding, which requires ongoing dialogue.

Invite participants to start with a point or question that stuck out to them and let the conversation continue naturally. Facilitators (teachers) are there to keep the peace, make sure everyone is getting a chance to speak, and prompt with questions if necessary.

Next Steps

[Here](#) is more information about Thatcher if you’re interested!

You can register for the Socrates Cafe style community conversation on December 15th from 7-8:30 [here](#).